

guidance ensured total force solutions were integrated into corporate Air Force deliberations on key issues including Air Force core mission force mixes, readiness requirements, and personnel policies.

General Jackson championed the modernization needs of the component's aging inventory of aircraft and equipment that yielded an additional \$400 million in congressional support for Air Force Reserve modernization requirements via the National Guard and Reserve equipment account. This additional support ensured the mission effectiveness and survivability of citizen airmen and preserved the Air Force Reserve as an interoperable, flexible, and combat-ready force. As a result, Reservists were reliably called upon during his tenure to conduct combat and humanitarian operations abroad, in addition to supporting our homeland with unique capabilities such as aerial spray and hurricane hunting.

During General Jackson's tenure, Air Force Reservists have mobilized in support of 54 named operations and exercises and have conducted total force, joint, and coalition operations at more than 100 locations worldwide. General Jackson's visionary leadership and ceaseless efforts have established the Air Force Reserve as a combat-ready force and an essential provider of operational capability, strategic depth, and surge capacity. Ultimately, General Jackson successfully postured America's citizen airmen to stand as a hedge against risk, while remaining fully ready to support ongoing operations and to respond to emerging threats with agility and innovation.

Congratulations to General Jackson on the notable conclusion of an outstanding military career. On behalf of the people of the great State of Georgia and a grateful Nation, I offer my sincere thanks to General Jackson and his wife, Barbara. I wish them both the very best as they embark on this new chapter.●

TRIBUTE TO COLONEL PAUL W. "PK" KIRBY

● Mr. ISAKSON. Mr. President, on the occasion of his retirement from the U.S. Air Force, I recognize Col. Paul W. "PK" Kirby for his more than 41 years of dedicated service to our country. In his most recent assignment, he serves as the Vice Commander, Air Force Reserve Command Recruiting Service and Deputy Director of Recruiting, Air Force Reserve Command, Robins Air Force Base, GA. In this role, he exercises command and oversight of over 450 military and civilian personnel worldwide at over 45 main operating locations and serves as the principle adviser to the both the commander of recruiting and AFRC commander on all matters relating to recruiting.

Colonel Kirby enlisted in the Air Force in May 1973 and served 13 years prior to receiving his commission

through the Deserving Airman Commissioning Program. Prior to entering recruiting services, Colonel Kirby served as a key member of the personnel community and served as Commander of the 302nd Combat Support Squadron for 36 years on active duty, as a civilian and within the Air Force Reserve Command as a Traditional Reservist and Air Reserve Technician. During this time, he developed and implemented key policies and procedures for Reserve Officer Personnel Management Act, Officer Development, Innovative Readiness Training Program, and Centralized Training, thereby enhancing overall combat readiness for the command.

As Vice Commander of Air Force Reserve Recruiting, Colonel Kirby has developed and executed numerous initiatives resulting in the Air Force Reserve Command, AFRC, exceeding its annual recruiting goal for 8 consecutive years. As the second largest Air Force Major Command, AFRC has been manned at greater than 99 percent for the past 8 consecutive years, reversing a decade-long trend of failing to meet congressionally mandated end-strength levels. He is directly responsible for accessing more than 58,000 airmen helping to transform the Air Force Reserve recruiters into the most productive within the Department of Defense.

Paul could not have been such a tremendous leader without the love and unfailing support of his lovely wife of 39 years, Wanda, and their three children, Jeremy, Rebekah, and Christopher.

I join my colleagues in expressing our sincere appreciation to Col. Paul W. Kirby for his outstanding service to both the U.S. Air Force and our great Nation. We wish him the best as he transitions into retirement. Colonel Kirby is a true professional and a credit to himself and the U.S. Air Force Reserve.●

TRIBUTE TO CARRIE WALIA

● Mr. KING. Mr. President, today I wish to recognize the outstanding devotion of Carrie Walia, who has worked to preserve Maine's rich outdoor heritage throughout her career. Carrie is stepping down from her position as executive director of Loon Echo Land Trust, and we recognize her service and thank her for her contribution to the great State of Maine.

In her role as executive director of Loon Echo Land Trust, LETL, Ms. Walia has invested deeply in the environmental sustainability of Maine's communities, specifically the Sebago Lakes region. That region has long been a renowned outdoor recreation area, attracting outdoor enthusiasts of all kinds. From boating to ice fishing, locals and visitors alike enjoy the natural beauty and tremendous resources it has to offer. Under Ms. Walia's leadership, LETL has been successful in preserving the region's beauty and ensuring its sustainability for years to come.

Ms. Walia joined LETL in 2004, while also working for the USDA-Natural Resources Conservation Service. Since becoming the executive director of LETL in 2008, she has spearheaded many conservation efforts with tremendous success. Her accomplishments include doubling LETL's conservation lands from 3,300 to 6,600 acres and securing over \$5.5 million in grants for high priority land acquisitions. She leaves LETL poised for continued success working on behalf of Maine communities.

I would like to join LETL and the people of Maine in recognizing and thanking Ms. Walia for her work and dedication to our great State. Her groundbreaking work with LETL has helped to preserve Maine's valuable natural resources and contribute to Maine's status as a leader in nature conservation and environmental stewardship. The State of Maine owes Ms. Walia immensely for all her hard work, and I wish her all the best in her retirement.●

2016 MILITARY ACADEMY APPOINTEES FROM UTAH

● Mr. LEE. Mr. President, one of the great privileges of representing my fellow Utahns in the U.S. Senate is the annual opportunity to meet the exceptional young men and women from the great State of Utah who have answered the call of service by applying to the U.S. Air Force Academy, the U.S. Military Academy, the U.S. Naval Academy, and the U.S. Merchant Marine Academy.

Under title 10 of the U.S. Code, each year Members of Congress are authorized to nominate a number of young men and women from their district or State to attend the country's service academies. It is my distinct honor to nominate 14 exemplary Utahns this year.

But receiving a congressional nomination does not guarantee acceptance. To be admitted, each applicant must meet on his or her own merits the academies' rigorous standards.

Well, I have studied the applications of these 14 men and women, and I can say, without hesitation or exaggeration, that you would be hard pressed to find a more accomplished, talented, patriotic group of American citizens anywhere. And so I was not surprised to learn that all 14 applicants have been accepted and will soon be joining the ranks of our Nation's military academies in the summer of 2016.

Each of these 14 students is of sound mind and body. This will serve them well in Colorado Springs, West Point, Annapolis, and Kings Point. But to succeed, they will need more than this.

The journey on which these young men and women will soon embark requires more than mental and physical aptitude. It demands strong moral character—leadership, courage, honesty, prudence, and self-discipline—and